



Multiple, duplicate, concurrent publication/Simultaneous submission Case study 3

Multiple submission to several Elsevier journals

In this example of alleged plagiarism, a journal manager (JM) noticed that several papers that had very similar titles and very similar content (and were all written by the same authors) were circulated to several different Elsevier journals. Two of those journals were in a single portfolio. After an initial investigation with the JM's and publishing editors (PE's) of the various journals affected, it was determined that none of the papers had been published yet; however some had already been accepted by the editors and were in various stages of production.

The PE obtained copies of all the papers and sent them to the affected journal editors. The editor of journal X reviewed the articles and wanted the JM to remove the paper due to a lack of originality. The PE advised this editor to first correspond with the author and allow them the "due process" period of 30 days to respond to the allegations (as recommended in our guidelines). Also, the PE was awaiting the response from the editor of journal Y (which is also in her portfolio).

The editor of journal Y later responded with a thorough analysis of all the papers. He agreed that the papers were all very similar but that there were some distinct differences in the results. He decided not to reject the article submitted to his journal. The PE sent these comments to the editor of journal X. The authors also contacted the editor of journal X and argued a case for their article.

The outcome? The editor ultimately agreed that the article should not be removed or rejected. However, he did ask the authors to revise and submit their work as a short communication instead of as a full-length article.